Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0002] with the following amended paragraph:

[0002] An often used method of fishing for relatively large fresh water fish includes baiting a line and leaving the line unattended. This is often referred to as setting a traut line or a branch line. Typically, this method is used to catch large fresh water fish such as catfish in excess of ten pounds. Similar methods are also used for ice fishing. Such unattended fishing lines can also be deployed by anglers from a boat. Unattended fishing lines are often in a slack condition or suspended from a float and therefore fail to provide the progressive increase in line tension that is most suitable for setting a hook to catch a fish or for retaining a fish once a hook is set.

Please replace paragraph [0003] with the following amended paragraph:

[0003] In an embodiment of the present invention the aforementioned problem is addressed by providing a fishing apparatus including a first fishing line that is secured to a fixed object for retrieval by an angler, a second fishing line for carrying a fish catching device such as ~~for example~~ a baited fishing hook or other such fishing tackle for attracting and hooking a fish, a float and a spring biased leader associated with the float which communicates between the first fishing line and the second fishing line. The float includes ~~a top~~ an upper surface and a ~~bottom~~ lower surface and preferably includes a substantially straight, vertical passageway extending between the ~~top~~ upper and ~~bottom~~

lower surfaces. A first link element is positioned above the passageway and is attached to the first fishing line. A second link element is positioned below the passageway and is attached to the second fishing line. The first and second link elements are preferably barrel swivels which are too large to pass into or through the float passageway. The spring biased leader connects between the first and second link elements. The spring biased leader includes a spring which can stretch from an unextended length to an extended length and a non-resilient leader line which is longer than the unextended length of the spring. The spring and the leader line communicate between the first and second barrel swivels in a parallel fashion so that the leader may extend while the leader line is slack but is limited from further extension when the leader line becomes taut.

Please replace paragraph [0011] with the following amended paragraph:

[0011] Turning now to the drawings, wherein like reference numerals identify identical or corresponding elements, and more particularly to FIG. 1 thereof, a fishing apparatus 10 is shown including a float 12, a first fishing line 5 and a second fishing line 7. First fishing line 5 is typically connected at its proximate end to a fixed object such as tree branch 6 ~~(or some other fixed object)~~ preferably by means of a barrel swivel 5A and clamp 5B. Barrel swivel 5A is a typical barrel swivel of the type well known in the art having two portions which can rotate relative to each other. Barrel swivels allow connected lines to rotate without twisting or tangling. Preferably, when fishing apparatus 10 is used to fish for larger, fresh water fish, first fishing line 5 is arranged with approximately 25 feet of slack. Second fishing line 7 carries a fish catching device 7A at

its distal end. Fish catching device 7A for example, may comprise a baited hook as shown in FIG. 1 or, for example, a lure having hooks and other fishing tackle such as fishing weights and the like.

Please replace paragraph [0012] with the following amended paragraph:

[0012] In FIG. 3, fishing apparatus 10 is shown to include first fishing line 5, buoyant float 12, a first barrel swivel 32, a spring biased leader 40, a second barrel swivel 52 and second fishing line 7. First barrel swivel 32 functions as a link element for connecting the distal end of first fishing line 5 with spring biased leader 40. Similarly, second barrel swivel 52 functions as a link element for connecting spring biased leader 40 and the proximate end of second fishing line 7. Barrel swivels 32 and 52 allow the relative rotation of second fishing line 7, spring biased leader 40 and first fishing line 5. The use of first and second barrel swivels ~~52~~ 32 and 52 prevents the twisting and tangling of first fishing line 5 and second fishing line 7.

Please replace paragraph [0013] with the following amended paragraph:

[0013] Spring biased leader 40, when under sufficient tension, extends from an unextended length as shown in FIG. 4 to an extended length as shown in FIG. 6. Spring biased leader 40 includes a spring 42 and a generally non-resilient leader line 44. As can be best seen in FIG. 5, spring 42 and leader line 44 are each connected at their respective

opposite ends to barrel swivels 32 and 52. Accordingly, spring 42 and leader line 44 connect between first and second fishing lines 5 and 7 in a parallel fashion. As can be best seen in FIG. 5, the length of leader line 44 is greater than the unextended length of spring 42. Leader line 44 is preferably fashioned from a generally unyielding small diameter stainless steel cable and includes a first looped end portion 44A for connecting to barrel swivel 32 and an opposite second looped end portion 44B for connecting to barrel swivel 52. Spring 42 includes a first end hook 42A for connecting to barrel swivel 32 and a second end hook 42B for connecting to barrel swivel 52. Spring 42 is preferably a stainless steel spring and is preferably maintained in a slack, unextended condition. In an example embodiment for catching large fresh water fish, spring 42, when not extended, may, for example, be three inches long while leader line 44 may be five or six inches in length. With such an example embodiment, spring 42 may have a spring constant of eight pounds per inch. Accordingly, a tension of between approximately 16 and 24 pounds may be needed to fully extend spring biased leader 40. Smaller fish may be best caught with the same example arrangement except that spring 42 might preferably be selected with a spring constant of approximately 4 pounds per inch.

Please replace paragraph [0016] with the following amended paragraph:

[0016] Fishing apparatus 10 can be understood as a tethered float which carries a spring biased leader having a limited range of elastic extension which in turn connects to a fishing line. Fishing apparatus 10 reacts progressively to the tension applied by a fish by

first taking up the slack in line 5 as the fish moves float 12 and then by providing a reacting tension as spring 42 of leader 40 extends until leader 44 is taut. Once leader 44 is taut, additional force applied by a hooked fish is resisted by lines 5 and 7 and leader 44. This arrangement also prevents a sudden increase in tension in line 5 or 7 which could cause line 5 or 7 to break thus allowing the fish to escape.

Please replace paragraph [0018] with the following amended paragraph:

[0018] A method for using fishing apparatus 10 can be understood by referring to FIGs. 5 and 6. The float portion of fishing apparatus is assembled by threading leader 44 and spring 42 through passage 16. barrel swivels 32 and 52 are attached to ~~hook~~ hooks 42A and 42B of spring 42 and first and second looped end portions 44A and 44B of leader line 44. Note that the length of leader line 44 must be longer than the unextended length of spring 42. First fishing line 5 is attached to upper circlet 32A of barrel swivel 32 and then secured at its opposite end to a fixed object 6 for easy retrieval such as a tree branch. A second fishing line 7 is attached to lower eyelet 52A of barrel swivel 52. Fishing hook 7A as shown in FIG. 1 or some other appropriate fish catching device may be secured to the distal end of second fishing line 7. Float 12 is then deployed so that it floats on the surface of a water body 2 such that first fishing line 5 has substantial slack on the order of 25 feet. When a fish (not shown) takes the hook and pulls on line 7, float 12 may be brought into a position as shown in FIG. 6. In FIG. 6, sufficient tension on second fishing line 7, has caused spring 42 to extend until leader 44 is taut and until float 12 is tilted with respect to the surface of water body 2. Although the fish may subsequently relax

tension and then reapply tension, a very sudden increase in tension in lines 5 and 7 will not occur because float 12 must be tilted into the position shown in FIG. 6 and spring 44 must also be extended as shown in FIG. 6 before greater amounts of tension can be applied to lines 5 and 7.

Please replace paragraph [0020] or the ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE with the following amended paragraph:

[0020] A fishing apparatus includes a float, first and second fishing lines and a spring biased leader. The first fishing line is ~~secured at one end for retrieval by an angler and supported at its opposite with the float.~~ connected at its opposite end to a spring biased leader which is associated with the float. The second fishing line has a proximate end and an opposite distal end for ~~supporting~~ attaching a fish catching device such as a baited hook. The spring biased leader ~~is supported by the float and~~ communicates between the first fishing line and the second fishing line. The spring biased leader includes, in a parallel arrangement, a spring ~~which can stretch from an unextended length to an extended length~~ and a non-resilient leader line which is longer than the unextended length of the spring. ~~The spring and the leader line communicate between the first fishing line and the second fishing line in a parallel fashion so that the extended length of the spring biased leader is limited by the taut length of leader line~~. A fish striking at the distal end of the second fishing line ~~first pulls the float and eventually causes the extension of the spring biased leader until the leader line is taut, thus preventing the fish from applying a very sudden force on either the first and second fishing lines~~ must cause the extension of

the spring biased leader before applying maximum tension on either the first or second fishing lines thus preventing the fish from applying a sudden breaking force to either fishing line.